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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER
28TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON RULES
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WHIP PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

COMMISSION ON SECURITY
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

November 18, 2004

Local Legends

c/o American Medical Women's Association
801 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Local Legends Selection Committee,

I am extremely pleased to nominate Dr. Ruth A. Lawrence, an exceptional woman physician, to be honored in your "Local Legends" exhibit in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health's National Library of Medicine exhibit entitled Changing the Face of Medicine: Celebrating America's Women Physicians. As the Democratic Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, I understand the importance of recognizing the achievements of exceptional women professionals in order to help encourage others to follow in their footsteps. Throughout her career in Rochester, NY, Dr. Lawrence has committed herself and her work to improving health care for children in our community and across the country. She is a sterling role model for aspiring women doctors.

Dr. Lawrence has dedicated her accomplished career to researching the issue of breastfeeding, and is a recognized national expert in this area. She directs the Breastfeeding and Human Lactation Study Center, housed within Department of Pediatrics at the University of Rochester Medical Center in Rochester, NY. Under Dr. Lawrence's direction, the Center is using a national database of thousands of families to research breastfeeding behaviors, such as the choice whether to breastfeed, the duration of breastfeeding, and substances such as herbs and drugs in human breast milk. The Center provides a networked computer system and telephone research services, which enable health care professionals to access free and timely information about lactation and breastfeeding. Dr. Lawrence established the Center through a grant from the U.S. Surgeon General's office, after hosting a national conference on breastfeeding in Rochester in the mid-1980s.

In addition to her remarkable work with the Breastfeeding and Human Lactation Study Center, Dr. Lawrence has an illustrious teaching and academic career. She became interested in breastfeeding during her residency at Yale New Haven Hospital over 50 years ago. As a Professor of Pediatrics and Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Rochester University School of Medicine, she pioneered a movement to educate

medical students on the benefits and techniques of breastfeeding. Her groundbreaking publication, "Breastfeeding: A Guide for the Medical Profession," was first issued in 1979 and has gone through five revisions and is used as the seminal textbook for medical students.

Dr. Lawrence's research, instruction and practice have lead to countless advancements in the field of lactation and breastfeeding. Due to her numerous contributions to the Rochester community and to the practice of medicine, as well as her role as an exemplary woman physician, it is my distinct pleasure to nominate Dr. Ruth A. Lawrence for national recognition as a "Local Legend."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Louise", with a large, stylized initial "L" that loops around the first part of the name.

Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress